

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. In a facility management system, an apparatus by which an occupant of a building submits a complaint, said apparatus comprising:

5 a communication network which is accessible by the occupants to transmit complaint messages;

10 a message processing system coupled to the communication network to receive the complaint messages, the message processing system containing a predefined message filtering criterion which is applied to received complaint messages and generating a warning when the received complaint messages satisfy the predefined message filtering criterion; and

a display device coupled to the server and presenting the warning to management of the building.

2. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the predefined message filtering criterion specifies a given number of complaint messages which must be received in order for a warning to be generated.

3. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the predefined message filtering criterion specifies a given number of complaint messages which must be received within a defined interval of time in order for a warning to be generated.

4. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the predefined message filtering criterion specifies an occupant characteristic, and the warning is generated upon receipt of a complaint message from occupants possessing that characteristic.

5. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the predefined message filtering criterion specifies a class of occupants, and the warning is generated upon receipt of a complaint message from an occupant in that class.

6. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the predefined message filtering criterion specifies a given area of the building and the warning is generated upon receipt of a complaint message from that area.

7. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the message processing system inhibits generation of a warning when a plurality of complaint messages are received from the same occupant within a predefined interval of time.

8. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the message processing system further comprising a storage device which retains information related to the received complaint messages.

9. The apparatus as recited in claim 8 wherein the display device also presents the information related to the received complaint messages that has been stored in the storage device.

10. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the message processing system comprises a server which forms an Intranet site on the communication network.

11. In a facility management system for a building that has a communication network which is accessible by occupants of the building, an apparatus by which the occupants submit complaints regarding an operating condition of the building,
5 said apparatus comprising:

a storage device containing a log for complaints received from the occupants;

a web site connected to the communication network and to the storage device, wherein upon being contacted by an
10 occupant the web site replies with a web page for submitting a complaint regarding an operating condition of the building, the web site also receives complaint messages from such an occupant via the communication network;

a complaint agent connected to the web site to receive
15 complaint messages therefrom and connected to the storage device, the complaint agent storing received complaint messages into the log in the storage device; and

a workstation coupled to the storage device to obtain and present information from the log to building management
20 personnel.

12. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein workstation comprises a complaint analyst which processes data received from the complaint agent and the storage device and formulates displays of that data for presentation to the
5 building management personnel.

13. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the data structure also contains information that for each occupant identifies an area of the building and the web site associates each complaint message received with the
5 area of the building identified for the occupant who sent the complaint message.

14. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the complaint agent logs environmental conditions with the complaint.

15. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the web site customizes the web page according to the area of the building identified for an occupant who contacted the web site.

16. The apparatus as recited in claim 15 wherein the web site customizes the web page with specific operating conditions defined for the area of the building identified for the occupant who contacted the web site.

17. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the complaint agent applies a filtering criterion to received complaint messages and generates a warning when the received complaint messages satisfy the filtering criterion; and the workstation presents the warning to building management personnel.

18. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the complaint agent applies a filtering criterion to received communication network messages and generates a warning when the received complaint messages satisfy the filtering criterion.

19. The apparatus as recited in claim 18 wherein the complaint agent inhibits generation of a warning when a plurality of complaint messages are received from the same occupant within a predefined interval of time.

20. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the complaint agent generates a warning in response to a given number of complaint messages being received.

21. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the complaint agent generates a warning in response to a given number of complaint messages being received within a defined period of time.

22. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the complaint agent contains a message filtering criterion which specifies an occupant characteristic and the complaint agent generates a warning upon receipt of a complaint message from
5 occupants possessing that characteristic.

23. The apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the complaint agent generates a warning in response to receipt of a complaint message from a predefined area of the building.

24. In a facility management system, an apparatus by which occupants of a building submit complaints regarding an operating condition of the building, the building having a communication network which is accessible by the occupants,
5 said apparatus comprising:

a storage device containing a log of complaints received from the occupants;

a web site connected to the communication network and to the storage device, wherein upon being contacted by an
10 occupant the web site replies with a web page for submitting a complaint regarding an operating condition of the building, the web site also receives complaint messages from such as occupant;

a complaint agent connected to the web site to receive
15 complaint messages therefrom and connected to the storage device, the complaint agent storing received complaint messages into the log in the storage device, the complaint agent applies a filtering criterion to received complaint messages and generating a warning when the received complaint
20 messages satisfy the filtering criterion; and

a workstation coupled to the complaint agent to receive and present the warning to building management personnel.

25. The apparatus as recited in claim 24 wherein the workstation presents building management personnel with information that was stored in the log in the storage device.

26. The apparatus as recited in claim 24 wherein the filtering criterion applied by the complaint agent inhibits a plurality of complaint messages sent by one occupant within a given interval of time from causing generation of a warning.

27. The apparatus as recited in claim 24 wherein the complaint agent logs environmental conditions with the complaint.

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